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ABSTRACT

This booklet on youth employment explores what States can do and are doing to expand employment opportunities and prepare youth for work. The solutions presented cut across the traditional lines separating education policy from employment and training policy. Coordinated action needed in both areas are identified, and an overview of problems, programs, and research is presented. First, States are challenged to respond to the high rates of youth employment by developing strategies which: create flexible learning opportunities; inform youth about career options; broaden services to support career exploration and job search by youth; expand the number and range of employment opportunities; and mobilize a wide spectrum of services by earmarking State resources for youth. Next, statistics are provided on youth and their status in the labor market, and various State program models that have already been implemented are described. The remainder of the report focuses on how States can tackle the problems of coordinating services for youth from different agencies and different funding streams. (KH)

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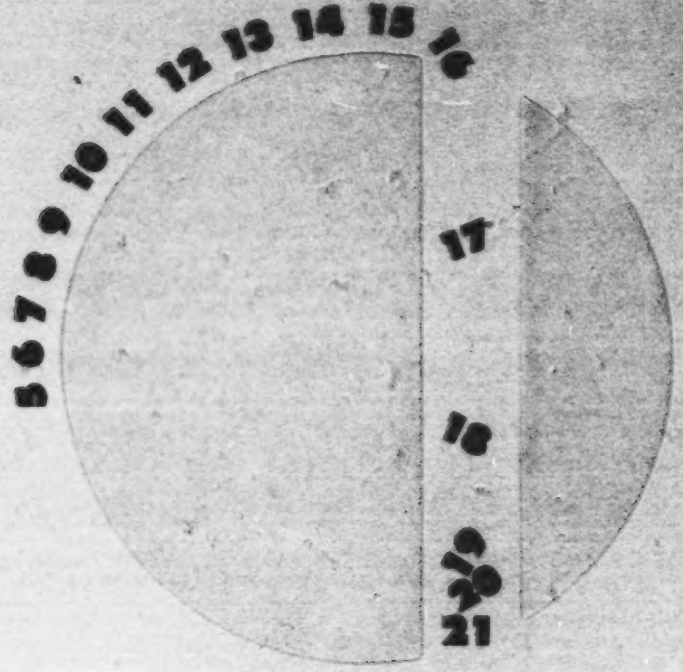

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Dear Fellow Governor:

A major challenge to policymakers at every level of government in the 1980s is to assure that all youth receive a quality education. The states have acted swiftly and vigorously with major school reform efforts in response to public demand for improved educational systems.

But the quest for quality education must not ignore a second challenge, the challenge to assure that all youth are able to make the transition from school to work and to make a contribution to their society. This second challenge is receiving growing attention from policymakers, but so far, it lacks the public attention which will be required if we are to address it adequately.

Despite an economy that has begun to recover since 1982, youth unemployment remains a persistent problem. Youth unemployment rates are unacceptably high. There is a tremendous disparity between unemployment rates for white and minority youth. Dropouts from school are too prevalent, and evidence abounds that dropouts are not very employable. Young people with a poor employment history face a future of uncertain employment. Inaction risks the loss of a critical human resource.

States are primary administrators, funders, and arrangers of education, employment, training programs, and a range of related social services. With employment stabilized, educational reform well underway, and the new policy tools in the form of the Job Training Partnership Act and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act available for creative application, states are now in a better position to meet the second challenge.

This booklet on youth employment explores what states can do and are doing to expand employment opportunities and prepare youth for work. It recognizes that the problem of youth unemployment cannot be solved by either schools or the employment and training system working in isolation. As a result, the booklet outlines solutions which cut across traditional lines separating education policy from employment and training policy. It identifies coordinated action which is needed in both areas. It is intended as an overview of the problems, the programs being tried, and what is known about making programs effective.

It stresses ways that governors might help to pass on to all American young people the legacy of working for their own better future.

Sincerely,

Richard F. Celeste

Richard F. Celeste
Governor

The Five-Year Dilemma

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Challenge to the States

The Five-Year Dilemma

The job market for young teenagers is, at best, limited. Although most youth remain in school until their late teens, many drop out at age 16 or younger before getting a high-school diploma or being old enough to qualify for most jobs. Of these teens, a growing proportion are unwed mothers and members of minority groups. For many of these young people, the period between 16 and 21 is wasted.

This is a critical time when youth must attain the educational skills essential for labor market success in adulthood. It is also a time when they must begin to gain exposure to and experience in the workplace in preparation for full assumption of adult work responsibilities as they make the transition from school to work.

Continued high rates of youth unemployment will have serious economic and social consequences for the states and the nation. Youth unable to gain initial entry into the job market will lack the skills and experience necessary to preserve economic growth in the face of a rapidly aging work force. Youth who cannot earn an adequate living will be increasingly dependent on public income support programs and/or generate longer-term costs as a result of inadequate nutrition and deferred health care. Idleness and frustration also contribute to increased crime and unwanted teenage pregnancies.

The combined human and financial cost of extraordinarily high youth unemployment will be staggering. As a result, it is critical that states continue to respond to this problem in a timely and coordinated manner. While there are clearly costs associated with additional state activities, nothing suggested here costs as much as the $14,000 national average that it costs to keep a young person in jail for just one year. The range of examples cited here include those that are relatively inexpensive on a per capita basis, such as providing career information for everyone to more costly ones that involve intensive individualized services, here called second chance alternatives.

The development of a state response must address this range of needs and include a variety of strategies which:

Create flexible learning opportunities—second chance alternatives—for the 15 to 20 percent who are not successful in regular schools;

Inform youth about career options;

Broaden services to support career exploration and job search by in- and out-of-school youth;

Expand the number and range of employment opportunities for youth, especially in inner cities and areas where the greater job deficit exists; and

Mobilize a wide spectrum of education, employment and related services by earmarking state resources for youth activities.

The following sections describe youth and their status in the labor market as well as various program models that are being implemented throughout the states to serve youth employability development needs. The concluding section focuses on how states can tackle the problems of organizational isolation and piece-meal tactics that have all too often limited opportunities for youth.

Youth and Their Status in the Labor Market

High Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment continues to be a critical problem. For minority teenagers it is a devastating problem with negative consequences extending into adulthood. Demographics and labor market trends forebode a worsening situation unless greater employment and learning opportunities for youth are provided.

FACT: The gap between adult and youth unemployment has tripled since World War II. In the 1940s the difference between adult and youth unemployment rates was a little over 4 points. By the spring of 1985, the difference grew to more than 13 points.

FACT: As of March 1985, 1 out of 5 people in the labor force was under age 25, but 2 out of 5 unemployed people were under age 25.

FACT: Today, the youth unemployment rate hovers around 20 percent, while that for adults is less than 6 percent.

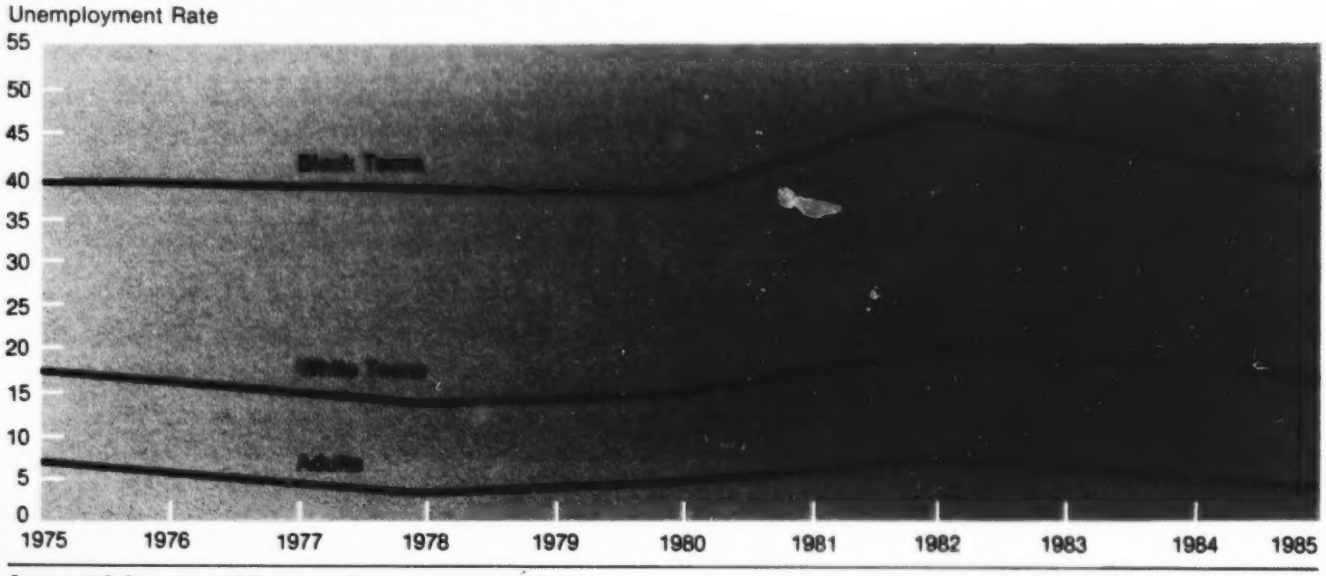
FACT: Despite economic fluctuations, youth unemployment has remained a consistent, lingering problem. (See Figure 1.)

FACT: In the spring of 1985, black teenage unemployment was more than double that of white teenagers which, in turn, was more than triple that for adults. (See Figure 1.)

FACT: Hispanic teenagers, as a group, typically suffer an unemployment rate about one and one-half times that of white teenagers. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 1

Unemployment Experience Over the Last Ten Years



Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, April 1985.

FACT: White teenagers are twice as likely to be working than their black peers. (See Figure 3.)

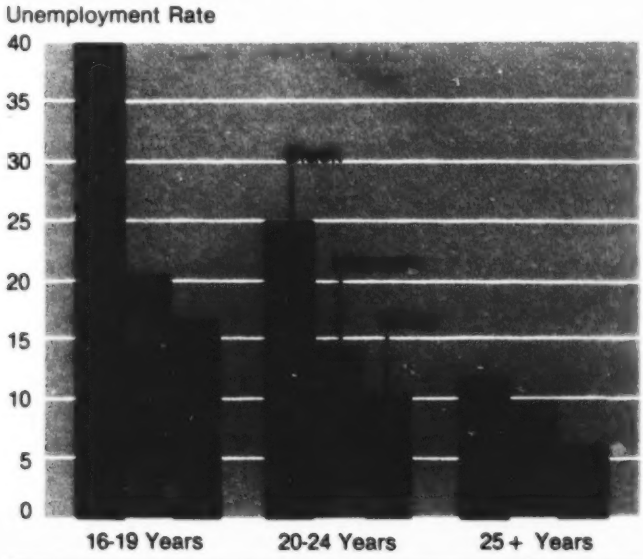
FACT: White teenagers are more likely to combine school and work successfully than are black teenagers.

FACT: An increasing proportion of youth are members of racial and ethnic minority groups.

FACT: Minorities will make up an ever greater proportion of the youth population into the 21st century. In 1970, blacks and other minorities accounted for 14 percent of 20 to 25 year olds. By 1985, the equivalent relationships had grown to almost 18 percent and 17 percent, respectively. By the year 2000 one out of every five youth will be from a minority group.

Figure 2

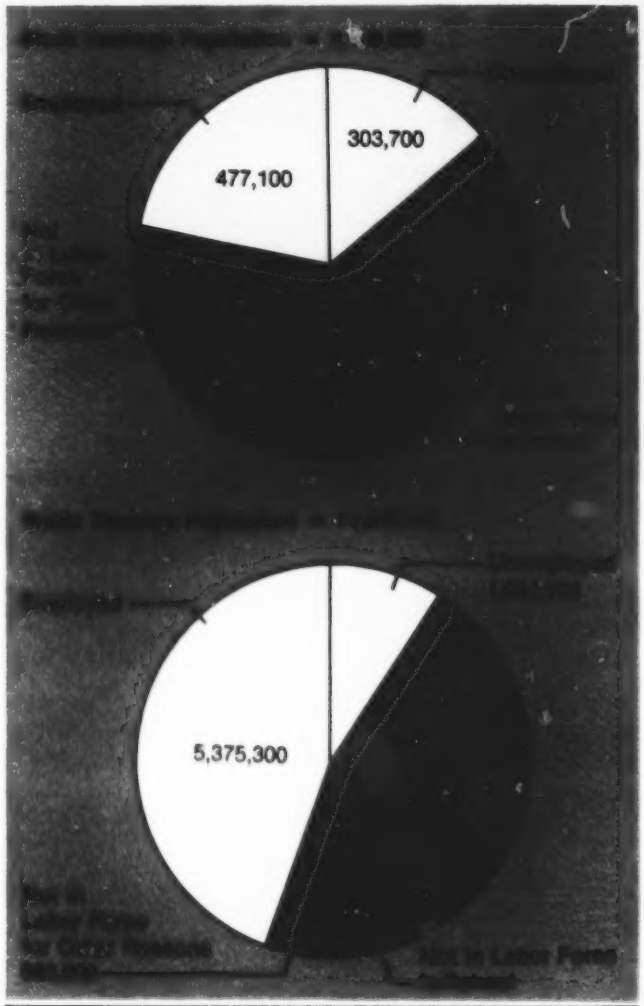
The Unemployment Gap



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, April 1985.

Figure 3

Labor Force Status of Black and White Teenagers Aged 16 to 19



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, April 1985.

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Lack of Basic Educational Skills

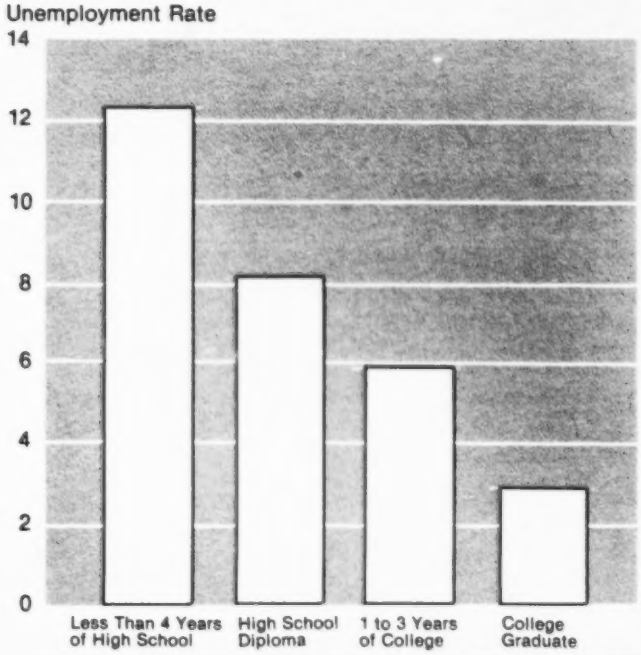
Research shows that level of education and success in the job market go hand-in-hand. Figure 4 illustrates that those with less education suffer higher rates of unemployment.

FACT: High school graudates earn 60 percent more than non-graduates during their first 10 years out of school.

FACT: High school dropouts are three times more likely to be unemployed than are graduates.

Figure 4

Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1984.

We are moving from a manufacturing society to an information and service society. One result is that at all levels within the labor market, a given set of job or occupational skills requirements quickly becomes obsolete. Basic communication, literacy, computational and analytical skills are increasingly indispensable for learning a new job, or even keeping up to date on an old one.

Dropouts have two strikes against them. First, while many young people who graduate from high school lack some of the basic skills required for job performance, dropouts are more likely to be deficient in the needed basic skills. Second, dropouts lack the high school diploma—the credential that opens the door to most entry-level jobs, especially those that offer opportunities for upward mobility.

FACT: Every year approximately 700,000 young people drop out of school and another 300,000 are at-risk of not completing high school.

FACT: Two-thirds of all economically disadvantaged people in the nation do not have a high school degree.

FACT: Among minority groups, especially in some urban areas, dropout rates have been estimated as high as 80 percent.

Young people usually give these reasons for dropping out: economic need; pregnancy; lack of family and peer group support; and failure to keep up with school requirements for behavior and academic achievement.

The Changing Job Market

Many entry-level and low-level manufacturing jobs previously available to youth have been lost to overseas competition in recent years. The decline of the family farm and the increasing mechanization of agriculture eliminated many other jobs that youth used to fill. Youth seeking jobs in the remaining traditional youth areas—retail sales and service—now face competition from unemployed adults and other individuals looking for supplemental income.

FACT: Fewer such opportunities exist in inner cities and rural areas where many poor and minority youth are concentrated.

A recent study by the Conference Board found that even those major employers that hire young people with less than a post-secondary degree are reluctant to consider any who have less than three to four years of work experience.

FACT: This means that young people below the age of 21 seldom have access to jobs offering opportunities for advancement or adequate income to support adult and family requirements.

Most teenagers end up working in a variety of entry level, often temporary, and part-time jobs in small companies in the service and retail sales sectors of the economy.

Family Situation

Two kinds of family situations work against a young person's being able to make the school-to-work transition successfully. First, youth whose family members are unemployed have more difficulty finding jobs. The research findings support the notion that "who you know" makes a difference. Knowing someone who can recommend and refer you is important for getting a job.

FACT: Black youth living in households in which others hold jobs are much less likely to be unemployed than are other young blacks.

FACT: Youth from welfare families are much more likely to be unemployed than other youth.

Second, young women who become parents are more likely to drop out of school, be underemployed or unemployed.

FACT: In 1982, over half a million babies were born to mothers under the age of 20.

Black women are more likely than white women to be teen mothers.

FACT: Half of all births by women aged 15 to 19 are out of wedlock; for black teenage mothers, the rate is 85 percent.

FACT: Pregnancy is a major cause of dropping out among school-aged females.

Although some teen mothers return to school, most do not, exacerbating their employment problems.

Action Agenda

Second Chance Alternatives

The strategies discussed in this section include both education and non-education based alternatives that serve youth at-risk of failure within traditional systems. These "second chance" alternatives, which appear more successful than traditional approaches for serving the needs of at-risk youth, include proven elements such as flexible management structures; tight accountability (tied to rewards and sanctions) built into the design of programs; and emphasis on coordination, including shared resources between systems to serve the multiple needs of clients. Virtually all such programs stress basic educational skill development as an integral aspect of other activities, including occupational and pre-employment training.

Second chance alternatives are usually tailored solutions designed to address the particular needs and circumstances of the youth being served. No one alternative provides the answer for all youths' employability problems. States may consider incorporating a range of such small scale, individualized alternatives within the more general education system so that youth with a variety of needs can better be served.

Dropout Prevention and Improvement of Basic Skill Attainment

This year, no fewer than 21 governors have called for major reforms within their states' educational systems to raise standards, improve math and science programs, and enhance the computer literacy of students in order to better prepare them for the changing demands of the labor market. While such programs are necessary to improve our schools, it is important to realize that such actions may initially encourage additional marginal students to drop out. Some states are beginning to address this concern through major educational reforms aimed at stemming the tide of young people dropping out of school.

Tennessee was one of the first states to implement a major statewide program designed to improve student performance. Tennessee has implemented stronger graduation requirements, a progressive testing of students' skills and graduation proficiency tests combined with a remedial program for those who do poorly on the progress tests. In addition, alternative learning centers have been established to redirect youth with behavior or instructional problems.

Arkansas is one of the states which has implemented a "promotional gate" program as a means of identifying basic skill deficiencies early before they lead to dropping out of school. Students are tested in 3rd, 6th and 8th grades. They must pass the basic skill test in the 8th grade in order to proceed to high school.

Other states, including ***Arizona, Colorado, Florida, New York*** and ***Wisconsin,*** have planned or undertaken major educational reforms aimed at reducing the drop-out rate. Some of these reach into elementary and junior high schools to provide early services to students identified as potential dropouts.

North Carolina is using funds available under the Job Training Partnerthip Act (JTPA) to embark on a program that will place a Job Placement/Dropout Prevention Center in each high school and an Extended School Day/Dropout Prevention Center in each local education agency (LEA).

- The Job Placement/Dropout Prevention Program which, to date, is operational in about half of the state's 340 high schools, serves potential dropouts, 14 to 21 years old, with remedial education, career and educational counseling, employability assessment, courses on the world of work and part-time jobs for those students in economic need. Steps are being taken to expand the program's availability to non-economically disadvantaged students.
- The alternative extended school day program is designed to recruit economically disadvantaged school dropouts back into the education system by offering them the opportunity to continue their high school education while working. Classes are scheduled in the late afternoon and classes incorporate job and career-related interests. Students are provided with work

experience in the public and private sectors through cooperative vocational education and JTPA supported try-out employment.

As part of ***Texas'*** educational reform program, the education system was charged with reducing the rate of dropouts and finding ways of serving those who already dropped out. One of the models being pilot-tested is the Community in School Program which is now operating in four urban areas throughout the state. This program brings together state and local agency resources to serve students within schools identified as having a high incidence of dropouts. The program, which is available for students from elementary to high school, is supported through a combination of state, local and federal funds.

At the same time, more than a dozen governors have challenged their legislatures to explore the year-round use of school facilities for a broad spectrum of learning activities, including such dropout prevention and basic skill maintenance activities as summer enrichment programs and parenting education for teenage parents. ***New York's*** governor is seeking funds from the state legislature for rehabilitation of older unused school buildings for conversion into multi-service centers for year-round delivery of youth programs.

Competency-Based Programs

At the federal level, both the Job Training Partnership Act and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act give local employers important roles in defining outcomes, setting standards and monitoring performance of individuals and the systems established to serve their needs. As overall managers of the JTPA and Vocational Education Systems, states are positioned to use this mechanism to effect greater accountability within programs. Specifically, states can promote closer meshing of basic educational and occupational skill development programs by recognizing attainment of youth employment competencies within their JTPA performance standards systems. Such an approach will help expand eventual placement opportunities and increase youth interest and participation.

Sites throughout the country are using a competency-based, self-paced system for delivering individualized instruction on an open-entry, open-exit basis, as the organizing framework for JTPA remediation and pre-employment activities. The Comprehensive Competencies Program (CCP) developed by the Remediation and Training Institute includes computer-assisted academic and functional remediation to supplement regular classroom instruction in academic skills ranging from elementary reading and math to high school and beginning college-level science, math, humanities, social studies and writing. In addition, it includes instruction on skills and knowledge required for acceptable performance in the labor market.

Several states are using JTPA set-aside funds to support implementation of such competency-based programs. JTPA ***Ohio,*** in conjunction with its local Private Industry Councils (PICs), launched a $3 million basic skills initiative using CCP. ***Colorado*** is using the CCP to upgrade the basic skills of its rural at-risk youth, with concentration on the young Hispanic dropout populations. In ***Colorado,*** two high schools and a community college will operate the CCP-based learning centers during school hours and a community-based organization, Rocky Mountain SER, will provide after-school and summer remediation. ***Hawaii*** also will be involved in a major basic skills initiative incorporating CCP.

Other states have initiated activities to promote competency-based programming. In ***Kansas,*** representatives of JTPA, program operators, the school system and the private sector have developed a model for youth competencies which encompasses pre-employment, work maturity, basic education and job-specific skills. The "Kansas Model" promotes better youth program development and coordination.

South Dakota established a statewide task force composed of educators, employers, parents, JTPA personnel and others to develop a strategy for serving special needs students across the state through a competency-based approach which includes the JTPA competencies in the learning package for special education students.

In ***Connecticut*** a group of state agencies and the state's Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) are working toward establishment of single set of JTPA youth competencies to be used across the state.

California has created a statewide group of "resource consultants" composed of educators and JTPA practi-

tioners to assist SDAs in developing youth employment competency systems. These consultants were trained and funded through joint efforts of the State Departments of Education and Job Training.

Participant Accountability

Experience has shown that some students who lack school discipline or have trouble in keeping up with their school work respond well when expectations of personal performance are clear and these standards are reinforced with incentives and sanctions. A variety of approaches to building greater student accountability into programs are therefore being tried.

Connecticut and ***Massachusetts*** are participating in a demonstration project aimed at creating models linking the JTPA and child welfare agencies in feeder programs so that 14 to 18 year olds under state care can benefit from opportunities offered under JTPA and eventually become ready for the adult world of work. The Opportunities for Youth program design follows the approach taken in supported work programs, which incrementally puts participants to the test of ever more demanding situations. In this adaptation, participants are given a series of one-day jobs and paid at the end of each day. At a later stage, the participants are given a more "permanent" job and are paid once a week.

The ***Minneapolis*** school system operates a summer program which is intended to increase basic educational skills of the participants and to provide employment opportunities. The amount of time a young person is allowed to work is inversely related to the time the student must spend in remedial summer school courses. Decisions regarding the mix of remediation and work experience permitted are based on the students performance in school and on a benchmark test battery. Students who successfully complete summer school, are offered employment opportunities for up to 20 hours a week for the remainder of the summer.

Another example of building a reward and incentive system into a career development program can be found in ***New Bedford, Massachusetts.*** The city's summer vocational education program provides weekly $10 bonuses for each participaing youth who passes individually tailored educational benchmarks. These benchmarks are set for each of nine weeks of the program based on the young person's needs and abilities. Money to pay the bonuses is contributed by the business community.

Applied Learning Situations

It has been demonstrated over and over again that for many young people basic educational skills as well as the specific occupational skills can best be taught when students have an opportunity to practice these skills in actual work situations. Multi-component programs combining education and work under JTPA, cooperative vocational education programs and apprenticeship successfully combine hands-on and theoretical experience to facilitate the successful integration of youth into the workforce.

Vocational education programs have, where possible, complemented classroom instruction with cooperative education placements in private companies engaged in related activities. Similarly, Work Experience and Career Exploration Programs (WECEP) implemented across the country give high school and elementary school students a combination of classroom instruction and work experience in an entry-level position in the field of their choice. Students earn credits toward graduation both for their classroom work and for their on-the-job work.

Apprenticeship, a time-tested model of on-the-job occupational training and related instruction, allows individuals to earn incrementally higher wages while acquiring skills in a competency-based program. The combination of tight accountability, applied learning and wages makes apprenticeship an attractive option for preparing youth for work. Special initiatives within state apprenticeship agencies and in conjunction with labor unions and vocational education programs, as appropriate, might be considered to support apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship-type programs for target populations. For instance, in ***Wyoming,*** the Carpenters and the Cement Mason Workers Unions operate a pre-apprenticeship program which provides remedial education to all the participants in preparation for entering actual apprenticeship programs. These unions also operate an in-school program combining classroom-based basic skill and career awareness instruction with on-the-job training in various crafts.

Other applied learning programs include partnership programs such as the one in ***Richmond, Virginia.*** These programs, involving the private sector and the school systems, are operating in 19 communities throughout the country providing high school students with both private sector jobs and work-related classroom instruction geared toward primary labor market jobs. Curriculum is specifically designed to support and enhance work experience.

The Career Intern Program of the Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OICs) is another private sector-oriented alternative which combines education and work.

In ***Atlanta, Georgia,*** the Rich's Department Store chain has placed a classroom inside one of its buildings where students attend basic education classes part of the day and work the rest of the day. The Honeywell Corporation in ***Massachusetts*** provides a similar industry-based version of this model.

In ***Pennsylvania,*** the ***Philadelphia*** High School Academies function as "schools within schools" providing basic skill instruction, social studies, occupational training and career development specifically related to the workplace demands of the students' chosen career field. Academies have been established in applied electrical science, business, applied automotive and mechanical science, and health care. Additional academies are planned for electrical services and food service.

Another approach to creating applied learning situations is being tried in ***New York City,*** where the school system, in partnership with the American Express Company, has created the Academy of Finance to train high school students for careers in the financial services industry. The program stresses hands-on experience and a marketplace orientation. The program is being expanded to ***Fort Lauderdale, Florida*** and ***Phoenix, Arizona.***

In ***Union County, New Jersey*** funds from the local school district, JTPA Title II-A and the private sector have been used to create a vocational-technical shop program which is tailor-made for specific employers. In the program, the school provides the customized classroom training and the employer donates the equipment so that the vocational-technical shop simulates the employer's working environment. Once the school-based training is completed, participants are placed in a company trainee program or in on-the-job training positions within the company.

In ***Tacoma, Washington,*** state and local funds are being used to implement self-paced occupational skill training in a program for economically disadvantaged handicapped youth. Participants learn all aspects of the grocery business in a real grocery store owned by the school board. The first phase of the training is conducted in a facility which simulates a full-service grocery store. Once a certain level of proficiency is reached, students start working in the grocery store owned by the school board. Upon completion of the program students are placed in unsubsidized jobs.

Training can be linked to jobs in still other ways. The ***Illinois*** Department of Commerce and Community Affairs recently used the Eight Percent Educational Set-Aside funds under JTPA to fund seven training projects for youth in public housing projects with one-half of the funds being used for classroom training and the other half for on-the-job training in rehabilitating public housing projects. Consideration is being given to further use of housing rehabilitation funds under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to enhance the program.

In ***Brooks County, Georgia,*** the Rural Education with Action Learning program combines job creation and vocational education. Based on a community needs assessment, four youth-operated income-generating enterprises in swine production, day-care, construction and bookkeeping were established as part of the vocational educational curriculum. Students learn vocational and management skills and earn money while participating in the economic development of the community.

The Credential: An Essential Ingredient

In response to the public's concern about the quality of American education, a great deal of emphasis in educational reform initiatives has been placed on strengthening educational outcome standards and better articulation of student performance expectations at each level of education. This emphasis has resulted in the raising of high school graduation requirements to give the high school diploma greater currency in today's labor market. At the same time, the growing acceptance of the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) by

employers as a valid alternative to the classroom-based high school diploma testifies to the need for a mechanism by which individuals who do not follow the standard educational path can authenticate their learning no matter how it is obtained.

Many economically disadvantaged youth lack a high school diploma or other credentials recognized by employers as relevant information to be considered in making hiring decisions. Unfortunately most employment and training programs have not made a practice of documenting the competencies attained by youth in a reliable, consistent and understandable manner accepted by employers. This lack of attention to documentation of skills has restricted the options for many young people.

Given the diversity of programs and systems that prepare people for the workforce and the wide variety of essentially state-determined occupational licensing and certification standards that already exist within education and employment, including apprenticeship, states individually and collectively might consider initiating a voluntary state-based standardized assessment process somewhat like the GED. The GED is currently administered through a voluntary network of officially deignated testing centers throughout the United States and many Canadian provinces.

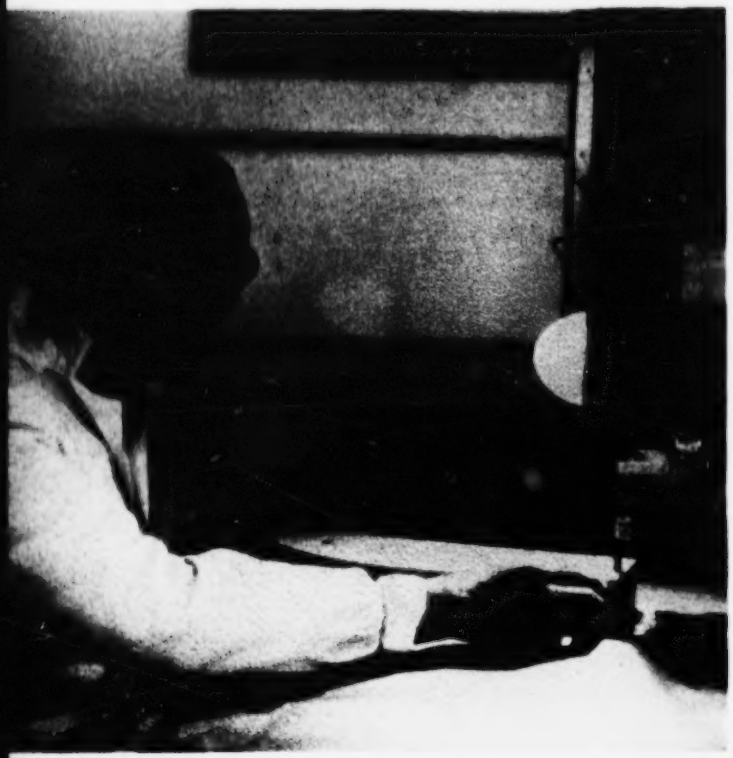
JTPA's emphasis on the development of competency-based education and training programs for youth has provided the opportunity to move ahead with implementation of an institutionally-based certificate of achievement that is intended to serve this purpose. ***Maine's*** largest JTPA Service Delivery Area and a number of schools throughout the state have begun to award a "Work Readiness Certificate" which documents the different problem solving work maturity and other pre-employment skills the participant has acquired in the program. The certificate is signed by the chairperson of the Private Industry Council and is to be used as a reference in subsequent job search and job interviews.

Although developed through a different process, the Career Passport promoted by the National Institute of Work and Learning is intended for use by the young job seeker in much the same was as ***Maine's*** Work Readiness Certificate. The Career Passport identifies and describes the skills, abilities and knowledge youth have gained through work and non-work experiences. The counseling process associated with development of a Career Passport has been adapted to help both in- and out-of-school young people discover their strengths, weaknesses and gaps in their experiences, solidify their education and career plans, explore career options and learn about application procedures and interviewing as part of the process of developing the final document.

Information: A Unique State Responsibility

It is a core state responsibility to provide key information to a wide variety of state data users. Both the public and private sectors need information that describes the demographic and socio-economic condition in the state. Businesses (those located within the state as well as those considering the state for relocation or expansion) and the state's citizens need this information to make informed social and economic choices. An active state role in managing information, which comes from diverse sources, should assure that it is efficiently produced, easily accessible and readily understandable to all user groups.

Youth who are in the process of making career decisions need information on jobs, occupational skill requirements and education and training opportunities to obtain such skills. Often career information is not accessible and easily understood by young people. To respond to this problem, states have undertaken a variety of initiatives to package information in a more user-friendly manner.



Career Information

The states provide useful information to students and guidance counselors in many high schools, vocational-technical schools, community colleges and universities.

As of 1984, over 40 State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICCs) mesh career information from a variety of state educational and employment training agencies into a single user-friendly system. These Career Information Delivery Systems (CIDS) are available as tools for career decision making. They are designed to deliver up-to-date information about current and future job opportunities in addition to further education and training programs available in the community. Several state systems, such as ***South Carolina's,*** include Employment Service job listings for those students interested in immediate employment.

Technology has been an important vehicle for delivering integrated career information through a variety of means such as on-line computers, and, more recently, microcomputers. However, printed materials, needlesort, microfiche, and, in some instances, a toll-free telephone number are key elements of the services provided. For example, in ***Nevada*** the governor has initiated a career publication produced as a result of a public/private sector partnership with the newspaper industry. Approximately 250,000 tabloids focusing on job outlook, wages and train ing opportunities were distributed to schools, homes and employment centers at no cost to the taxpayers.

Supporting Career Exploration and Job Search

Many young people have unrealistic career goals, lack awareness of medium- and long-term labor market needs, and have not crystalized their personal goals for occupational satisfaction. Thus, for most youth, especially economically disadvantaged youth, familiarity with the world of work is, at best, limited. A wide variety of initiatives directed at opportunities for career exploration and development of work-related behavior have been developed for both in- and out-of-school youth. These activities range from school-based career education, workshops and career days to job shadowing and internship programs, and career testing and counseling activities.

Governors can help facilitate the hiring and retention of youth by brokering and supporting the natural labor market process of career exploration, job search and entry into employment by encouraging schools, the public employment service, the private sector and a range of voluntary and other organizations to contribute to this effort.

School-Based Options

Schools provide a fruitful environment for the delivery of career exploration programs.

Oregon and ***Maryland*** recognized the importance of linking education to work by including career exploration requirements in their state high school graduation requirements. Such requirements can be met through many different kinds of career-oriented activities ranging from career days and job fairs to more structured career educational programs such as the Experience Based Career Education program and the Executive High School Internship program.

About 150 school systems in 27 states now operate Experience Based Career Education (EBCE) programs for career exploration and basic academic skill development purposes. EBCE is a comprehensive alternative high school program designed to bridge the gap between the classroom and the community and between study and experience through programmatic emphasis on academic and life skill competencies and academically-focused, non-paid short- and long-term career explorations. Depending on the emphasis placed on the alternative education and career exploration aspects of the program within a state or community, youth may participate from as little as six months for career exploration purposes to as long as four years as an alternative to a regular high school experience.

The Executive High School Internehip program offers seniors who have completed their requirements for high school graduation an opportunity to intern in private sector business during their last semester. Interns work four days a week and spend one day in school.

The Jobs for America's Graduates program, now operating in eight states, is another school-based program which focuses on development of pre-employment skills

including career information. The program, which was originated in ***Delaware,*** helps prepare high school seniors for transition to employment.

Labor Exchange Services

A renewed emphasis on Employment Service (ES) placement and information activities within high schools tapping the ES' unique capacity in the field of vocational assessment may be in order to help youth obtain jobs while they are still in school and as they graduate and enter the full-time workforce. The public employment service has traditionally had a portfolio of fully validated assessment instruments at its disposal. The most widely used of these is the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) which consists of 12 occupational aptitude tests. The GATB has, in the past, been widely used by schools under test release agreements with the Employment Service. In recent years, because of an emphasis on placement and lack of resources to pay for the training of school personnel to administer the test, its use with young people has been curtailed.

Several states have begun revitalizing the ES testing program and involvement with schools. ***Hawaii*** is using satellite videotape and microcomputer technology to help counselors and educators in the Pacific basin improve their career guidance techniques.

In ***Florida,*** the Employment Service plays an important role in helping vocational education programs meet their legislatively mandated performance standard of placing 70 percent of program completers in training-related employment. Employment Service staff who are outstationed in vocational education institutions through the state, provide access to information about jobs through the Job Bank system.

In ***Delaware,*** job search workshops for 9th graders have been pilot-tested in an effort to improve services to in-school youth.

Beyond the Classroom Door

A broad spectrum of community-based organizations exist that have proven to offer important support to school systems in operating pre-employment and more comprehensive alternative youth programs.

The ***Washington, D.C.*** Multicultural Career Intern Program, an affiliate of SER-Jobs for Progress, a national Hispanic employment and training organization, works with the D.C. Board of Education, the D.C. JTPA Private Industry Council and the Mayor's Department of Employment Services to conduct an internship program aimed at developing positive career patterns for disadvantaged urban young people. The program which has strong support from private corporations and foundations places particular emphasis on Hispanic and other immigrant youths. The program for 16 to 21 year-old dropouts and potential dropouts includes academic courses to meet the requirements of a high school diploma, intensive training in English, mandatory career development seminars, on-the-job career exploration and training, and specialized skills development. Graduates of the program also receive post-high school services such as job placement and university entrance assistance.

Another example of a community-based model for pre-employment services is that provided by 70,001 Ltd. programs throughout the nation. The multi-component 70,001 model involves pre-employment training, educational upgrading including study for the high school General Equivalency Diploma (GED), private sector job placement assistance, post-employment counseling and motivational activities which recognize participants' individual progress and achievements.

Many communities are also forging important links with traditional national voluntary youth organizations to enhance opportunities for career exploration and to reinforce the need to stay in school and acquire the credentials required for success in the world of work. The national YWCA has worked effectively in six cities to help young women in inner city neighborhoods develop a broader awareness of career options through personal and career counseling. Pregnancy prevention is a key element of the Y program. Both the National Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts have developed working relationships with schools throughout the country to provide career awareness and career exploration programs for its members. The Boy Scout Explorer program offers hands-on experience in the workplace with adult volunteers.

Expanding Opportunities for Work

Getting a first job in the service sector or otherwise may be relatively easy for many young people but for those who lack access to information about jobs, familiarity with job search techniques and personal references to provide "a foot in the door," the process is more difficult. High school dropouts have a harder time than graduates. A recent survey of employers in a major city found that less than one-fifth of all jobs were open to those without a high school degree.

The Catch 22 situation many young people find themselves in is that they cannot get a job without experience and they cannot get experience because of the limited opportunities available to teenagers. Empirical studies based on the U.S. Department of Labor's National Longitudinal Survey provide evidence that consistently poor labor market experience during the early years has a detrimental effect on subsequent employability and income and that periods of teenage employment represent both loss of work experience and growth in job information and skills. Early labor market failures may also have injurious effects on attitudes toward work.

Strategic action by states (and local communities) targeted to specific geographic areas, or designed to expand the range of jobs available to youth, can address youths' immediate economic needs and improve their long-term employment prospects. Such strategies may, at the same time, contribute to a reduction in high school dropout rates.

Conservation Corps - A Special Case of Direct Job Creation

*From **Washington** to **Pennsylvania**, from **Alaska** to **Texas**, $110 million of state and local resources have gone to establish state-wide youth service and conservation corps programs.*

Twelve statewide conservation corps and youth corps programs operate year-round supplemented by five statewide summer conservation programs. Another 16 volunteer and community service programs such as ***New York City's*** Volunteer Corps serve additional youths. Such progams are often operated through private non-profit agencies.

Although most corps programs operate primarily in rural settings, a number can also be found in urban areas. For the most part, corps programs are open to all youth regardless of income at least for part of the year. A few programs such as ***Iowa's*** and the one that is being planned in ***Vermont*** are targeted to the economically disadvantaged. Youth and conservation corps programs combine multiple purposes: to improve the conditions of the environment and community; to provide young people with experience needed for a successful transition from school to work; and to instill a sense of volunteerism and community service in the youth who serve. Some corps have gone beyond offering work and service experience. The ***California*** Conservation Corps, the oldest state-based program, for example, has mandatory GED and literacy programs. The ***Michigan*** Youth Corps which gives priority to youth from low-income families and those on public assistance offers career counseling and employability skills development. Surveys have shown that two-thirds of the youth in ***Michigan's*** program go on to school or jobs.

Encouraging Youth Employment Through Fiscal Policy and Regulatory Relief

States have at their disposal a range of fiscal and taxing authorities and tools which can and are being used to create and retain jobs within communities throughout the state.

For instance, 24 states have enacted enterprise zone legislation which provides tax and regulatory relief and targeted economic development resources to depressed urban and rural areas. Although usually not specifically targeted to youth, youth benefit from the spin-off effects of such job creation efforts. In some cases, specific targeting to youth does occur. For instance, in ***Allegheny County, Pennsylvania,*** a component of the enterprise zone focuses specifically on youth employment. ***Kentucky*** is currently considering developing criteria within their enterprise development program would promote job

creation targeted to youth.

States may also consider providing bonus points within the selection criteria under the state administered small communities portion of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to encourage development of job creation projects targeted to economically disadvantaged youth.

The State of ***Maryland*** has been particularly aggressive in marketing the use of the Federal Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC) to expand the number and types of employment opportunities for youth. The state has provided incentives to local Employment Service offices to market the use of the tax credit.

Minnesota's Emergency Employment Development (MEED) program is another useful model. The program creates employment opportunities through a direct wage subsidy to firms that hire and retain eligible job applicants. For the most part, private sector jobs have been created in small companies with labor intensive operations and a high potential for growth and long-term job creation. It is precisely such small firms which offer the greatest potential for expansion of youth employment opportunities.

Other pre-regulatory incentives for expanding employment opportunities for youth might include promoting greater use of the existing learner wage exemption to the Fair Labor Standards Act and finding options for public sector financing of worker protections (i.e., Workmens' Compensation) for the youth workers involved in work preparation programs.

Government as an Employer

State and local governments provide the potential for employment opportunities for youth.

Ohio's governor requested all cabinet members to provide work sites for 14 to 21 year-old youths participating in the JTPA Summer Youth Employment Program. In the summer of 1984, over 1,700 youth were placed at state agency worksites.

The city of ***Louisville, Kentucky*** took another approach. There, the city requires all city contractors with contracts over $40,000 in the field of architecture, engineering and accounting to provide economically disadvantaged high school juniors with on-the-job training opportunities. The city, using Kentucky Department of Education and JTPA funds, together with participating companies, share the cost of compensating students during their 13-week try-out employment.

Promotion of Youth Employment

State-wide promotion campaigns to solicit jobs for youth are an effective way of garnering broad citizen support for, and private sector involvement in, providing youth an opportunity for productive work.

In ***Michigan,*** the governor issued an executive declaration in observance of Youth Employment Month kicking off a campaign which was jointly administered by the state Departments of Education and Labor. ***Utah's*** governor proclaimed a Summer Youth Employment Week as part of a campaign managed through a public/private partnership operated in conjunction with the National Alliance of Business.

In ***California,*** the summer youth campaign was coordinated by a task force including the private sector, the governor's office, the state legislature and a number of state agencies.

Colorado's private sector-based initiative, as others, have obtained radio and TV media support to solicit jobs. ***Massachusetts,*** through its Mass Jobs campaign, uses public service announcements on radio and television as well as a toll-free hot line to refer individual job seekers and employers to local PIC and Employment Service offices. A distinctive Mass Jobs logo attracts attention and jobs.

Similar city-wide efforts can be found throughout the country. In some cities, such as ***Baltimore*** and ***New York City,*** special non-profit organizations are established to enable the summer jobs campaign to obtain tax deductible cash contributions. ***Atlanta*** employers specifically set aside a portion of summer jobs for low-achieving juniors and seniors who are in the lowest quartile in-school.

Mobilizing a State Response

Coordination: A Necessity and A Challenge

The deficits many at-risk youth bring to the labor market include health and legal problems as well as family responsibilities that cannot be solved by employment initiatives alone. In order to effectively help such youth overcome their individual barriers to employment, a number of services often available from different agencies and supported through different funding streams must be brought together. In a time of fiscal constraints, states have little choice but to find cost efficient and effective ways of mobilizing and organizing public and private institutions in cooperative efforts to deliver services, as needed, to meet individual client needs. In bringing this market orientation to the delivery of services, the challenge will be to create financing strategies as well as planning and management tools through which services can be bought and individuals referred to appropriate agencies not according to institutionally driven arrangements but client needs.

Colorado's recent adoption of a school voucher approach to creating flexible alternatives for school dropouts is an example of such a market-driven strategy. ***Colorado's*** program allows students who have dropped out of school for at least six months the choice to re-enroll at another participating school. Eighty-five percent of the state aid associated with that student flows with him or her to the receiving school district.

State action to promote coordination must recognize that services are most often not delivered directly by a state agency but through other intermediaries, including local schools, hospitals, community-based organizations employers and others. The state therefore needs to develop strategies which provide a framework for coordination supported by:

- the use of financial incentives that reward agencies for working together;
- an information system that allows communication between agencies using a common language about client needs, their status and outcomes resulting from service; and
- management and planning approaches that bridge separate organizational and governance structures.

Both ***Masssachusetts*** and ***Michigan*** recognized that institutional coordination problems associated with delivering services to dropouts and disadvantaged youth ultimately have to be resolved at the local level. ***Massachusetts*** decided to further local coordination efforts by strengthening the JTPA Private Industry Council's community-wide planning role. This was done by including strong requirements for joint local planning and coordination between educational institutions, training agencies and the private sector in a Request for Proposal issued to Private Industry Councils for distribution of the state's JTPA Eight Percent Education Set-Aside. ***Michigan*** JTPA officials required that cooperative agreements between the SDA and local school district had to be negotiated prior to the release of state funds.

In order to fill an unmet need regarding employment and training programs for teenage parents, the ***Maryland*** Department of Employment and Training earmarked a portion of Work Incentive (WIN) program funds going to JTPA Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) for training AFDC recipients to provide incentives to SDAs to operate programs for teenage parents. These incentives took the form of higher reimbursement rates to SDAs (relative to those for other AFDC recipients) for enrolling AFDC teen parents and having them complete training.

In ***South Carolina,*** its Youth Coordinating Council has designed an operational strategy to coordinate existing services provided by state and local agencies to youth 14 to 16 years of age who have had or are likely to have problems with the law. Coordination is to be accomplished by local youth development teams composed of Department of Youth Services, Employment Security Commission and school district staff. These teams are to assess youth needs and the existing community services and, if necessary, develop additional activities needed to increase the basic educational skills and employability of the identified youth.

New Jersey, Pennsylvania and ***Utah*** are attempting to promote coordination through information management systems and policy. In ***New Jersey,*** for instance, the governor has created an Office of Telecommunication and Information Systems which will coordinate the design of information systems, the definitions they use, information sharing activities, as well as monitor the accuracy and integration of information for all departments within the state.

Several governors have involved their cabinet officers in efforts to coordinate the activities of the states' executive branch agencies. ***Vermont's*** governor created a Job Skills Cabinet to review and report on the organization of employment and training services across state government. This cabinet is chaired by the Director of the Governor's Office of Policy, Research and Coordination and has as its members the heads of the major state agencies responsible for such services.

Similarly, in ***Ohio,*** the governor has organized his cabinet into groups called "cabinet clusters" to work together on coordination issues such as those associated with implementing the Job Training Partnership Act and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. The Employment and Training and Human Resources clusters worked together to produce the Governor's Strategic Plan for the Eighties and Beyond, "Investing in Ohio's People."

Skills needed by youth for employment provide the organizing framework for state executive branch coordination efforts under ***Colorado's*** "Statewide Youth Initiative Agreement." This agreement has been signed by all cabinet level officials dealing with human resources development.

In ***Virginia,*** a private sector task of the JTPA State Job Training Coordinating Council has been charged with making recommendations to the governor regarding the development of a framework for an overall employment and training policy for the Commonwealth. The Task Force is comprised of private sector representatives from State Boards and Councils whose pervue is either directly or indirectly related to employment and training as well as four private sector representatives from Virginia's JTPA Private Industry Councils.

Earmarking State Resources

The many varied initiatives undertaken by states and localities to:

- *create flexible learning alternatives;*
- *inform youth about career opportunities;*
- *broaden career exploration and job search services; and*
- *expand job opportunities for youth*

testify to the fact that both the resources and authorities to affect the various aspects of the youth employment problem already lie with the states and localities.

Although a number of states have begun to coordinate state policies that have an effect on youth, it is fair to say that no one state has put all the pieces together. Many of the innovations cited in this publication are being implemented on a small scale more or less as pilot efforts to solve specifically identified youth needs.

In developing state policies, it is important that states recognize that it is differentiated strategies that deal with the needs of individual youth rather than broad-brush solutions that make a difference in helping young people. There is no one answer. If anything it is the variety of options made available that will begin to solve some of the youth employment problems.

Further, solutions to the youth employment problem will require more than quick fixes to address the immediate needs of the 16 to 21 year olds who have already fallen between the cracks. Smart involvement of state resources will have to be devoted to implementation of longer term, more comprehensive services. States should insure that:

- *educational reform initiatives for in-school youth address the needs of all youth including those at-risk of dropping out;*
- *opportunities for productive work are made available to young people in both the private and public sectors; and*
- *adequate resources are devoted to intensive remediation and longer-term alternative programs which provide a needed second chance for many out-of-school young people.*

The governors recognize that addressing the youth employment problem must be a shared concern of the states, the federal government, communities and the private sector. As a shared responsibility it requires a positive response at all levels to ensure youths' productive participation in our nation's economy.

The nation has responded to the challenge of improving education. We must go beyond that to meet the second challenge—to give all our young people the opportunity to work.

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